

BOOK REVIEWS

CHRISTIAN ZIEGLER. INTRODUCTION BY MICHAEL POLLAN. 2011. **Deceptive Beauties: The World of Wild Orchids.** (ISBN-13: 978-0-226-98297-7, hbk.). The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois 60637, U.S.A. (**Orders:** www.sinauer.com). \$45.00, 183 pp., color photos throughout, 9¾" × 9¾".

The book jacket describes the author as "a biologist turned photographer specializing in tropical natural history." That is obviously a true statement—but it doesn't go far enough. This is a person who greatly enjoys what he's doing and it is clearly reflected in the beauty, the layout, and the genuine "feel"—and love—of orchids.

Michael Pollan's introduction, "Sex Among the Orchids," definitely catches the reader's attention with his opening statement: "We animals don't give plants nearly enough credit." His following discourse is not only fascinating and treated with fact, history, and humor, the reader is easily fully engaged—and can't put the book down.

The photography is outstanding. Ziegler's accompanying chapters are well written, explanatory, and provide exceptional background, diversity, descriptions of various habitats, atmospheric changes, uses, concerns, biological changes that influence the habitat environments, and, of course, effects of human behavior as well—real or potential.

Expect to take time to browse and enjoy this volume. It is really well done, and it makes one very aware of potential challenges in the upcoming years.—*Helen Jeude, Volunteer and Assistant Editor, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, 1700 University Dr., Fort Worth, Texas 76107-3400, U.S.A.*

CAROL GRACIE WITH A FOREWORD BY ERIC LAMONT. 2012. **Spring Wildflowers of the Northeast: A Natural History.** 2012. (ISBN: 978-0-691-14466-5, hbk.). Princeton University Press, 41 William Street, Princeton, New Jersey 08540, U.S.A. (**Orders:** <http://press.princeton.edu/titles/9668.html>, 609-258-4884, 609-258-6305 fax). \$29.95, 290 pp., 512 color illus., 7½" × 10".

What a welcome addition to wildflower literature! This is the ideal book for readers of all levels of expertise, from the professional botanist to the armchair naturalist. Princeton University Press affirms the value of Carol Gracie's passion and attention to detail, her botanical research and travel, her years of teaching, her insightful writing, and 500 revealing photographs. The book first appears to be a gorgeous coffee table book, but then, I opened those first pages, and found myself dropping down the rabbit hole into Carol Gracie's extraordinary botanical world rarely experienced by most people. Her teaching years at the New York Botanical Gardens, her intelligence and curiosity come alive to show the identification and natural history of a select group of woodland wildflowers from baneberries to violets. She thinks of the question before you ask it. She touches on complicated topics of climate change, ethnobotany, horticulture, medicine and more, without being tedious. In addition, she refers to Indian lore, botanical literature and art. Carol Gracie explains the reason for taxonomic name changes and adds an impressive list of references, which is testament to the extensive research to prepare this work. I have heard that some times when we look, we don't see. Carol Gracie teaches us to see. I salute this gifted plantswoman for focusing on the beauty and intricacies of northeastern wildflowers, adding a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the flora of the United States.—*Jane Austin Bruckner, graduate of Rutgers University, New Jersey, a Registered Nurse, a Certified Master Gardener and BRIT Volunteer, 1700 University Dr., Fort Worth Texas 76107-3400, U.S.A.*